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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
/068 W
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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4069

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, DR
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR HURWITCH'S FAREWELL PARTY

REFS: SANTO DOMINGO 1317, 1362, 1513

1. PREPARATORY TO DEPARTURE FROM POST, AMBASSADOR HURWITCH DECLINED ALL BUT THE OBLIGATORY SOCIAL FUNCTIONS AND CONCENTRATED HIS GOODBYES AT PARTY HE HOSTED EVENING OF MARCH 31. WHILE "DESPEDIDA" WAS GALA SOCIAL EVENT, IT WAS ALSO A SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL HAPPENING.

2. FIRST, "BOYCOTT" BY MAIN OPPOSITION PARTY, PRD, OF EMBASSY SOCIAL FUNCTIONS ENDED. PARTY SECGEN JOSE FRANCISCO PENA GOMEZ MADE HIS FIRST APPEARANCE AT AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE SINCE AMBASSADOR YOUNG WAS HERE LAST AUGUST. WITH PENA WERE PRD VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE JACOBO MAJLUTA AND OTHER LEADING LIGHTS IN PARTY; PRD PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ANTONIO GUZMAN AND PARTY PRESIDENT SALVADOR JORGE BLANCO WERE STUCK IN SANTIAGO IN HEAVY THUNDERSTORMS, BUT MADE CERTAIN THEIR POLITICAL COLLEAGUES WHO DID ATTEND MADE KNOWN TO US WHY THEY HAD NOT COME.

3. PRD BOYCOTT OF PUBLIC APPEARANCES WITH AMBASSADOR OR EMBASSY OFFICERS, AN OPEN SECRET AROUND TOWN FOR MONTHS, WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VOTED LAST SEPT BY 42-MAN CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. IT WAS PROMPTED BY THE PARTY'S DECISION TO EXPLOIT, FOR ITS OWN POLITICAL PURPOSES, PRESIDENT CARTER'S EULOGY OF PRESIDENT BALAGUER DURING LATTER'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON FOR PANAMA CANAL TREATY CEREMONIES LAST SEPT; FOR THAT REASON THEY REFUSED TO ATTEND RECEPTION GIVEN FOR ASST SEC TODMAN DURING HIS VISIT IN OCT, AND HAVE BEEN MORE OR LESS HARD TO GET EVER SINCE, ESPECIALLY

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FOR ANY OCCASION IN WHICH THEY MIGHT BE PHOTOGRAPHED WITH US EMBASSY PERSONNEL.

4. WE ARE NOT YET CLEAR WHY PRD DECIDED TO CALL OFF BOYCOTT; OBVIOUSLY ALL PARTY DECISIONS, WHICH ARE RESULT OF COLLEGIAL WILL OF PRD LEADERSHIP, ARE FOUNDED ON POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS. FROM THEIR BEHAVIOR AT RECEPTION, HOWEVER, IT WAS OBVIOUS THEY HAD COME TO PAY THEIR RESPECTS TO AMBASSADOR.

5. SECONDLY, RECEPTION SERVED TO BRING TOGETHER COMPETING FORCES IN PRESENT ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. COUNTRY WAS TREATED TO NEWS REPORTS AND HEAVY PHOTO COVERAGE, LIVE AND STILL, OVER PAST WEEKEND SHOWING PENA AND HIS PEOPLE EMBRACING VICE PRESIDENT GOICO MORALES AND CORDIALLY CONVERSING WITH OTHER REFORMISTA LEADERS, AS WELL AS OTHER POLITICAL LEADERS WHO WERE INCLUDED IN 700-MEMBER GUEST LIST. COMING ON TOP OF PRD'S FORMAL CALLS ON PRESIDENT BALAGUER AND THEIR ACCIDENTAL MEETINGS WITH BALAGUERISTAS AT AIRPORT RECEPTION FOR MARIO SOARES (REFTELS), PICTURE OF SOCIAL CONCOURSE CONVEYED SHOULD BE REASSURING TO PUBLIC AT LARGE.

6. POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE, WHATEVER IT MIGHT BE, OF COMING TOGETHER OF GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION POLITICANS HAS BEEN NOTED IN ALL BRANCHES OF MEDIA. ONE WIDELY-READ COLUMNIST BAPTIZED PARTY AS "NATIONAL JUBILEE." LISTIN DIARIO RECENTLY HAD SAID US EMBASSY PARTIES "HAVE BEEN MADE FAMOUS IN OUR COUNTRY AS A
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MEETING PLACE FOR OPPOSITION AND GOVERNMENT POLITICAL FIGURES" WHO CAN TREAT CIVILLY WITH ONE ANOTHER ON NEUTRAL DIPLOMATIC TERRITORY.

7. FINALLY, BEFORE CAMERAS AND SOUND EQUIPMENT, AMBASSADOR HURWITCH, STANDING WITH PENA, THE VICE PRESIDENT AND THEIR FOLLOWERS, HAD A NATURAL AUDIENCE TO PRONOUNCE, YET ONCE AGAIN, USG NEUTRALITY IN COMING ELECTIONS AND HIS HOPE THAT THE BEST MAN WINS.
HURWITCH

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